

JOURNALISM 110— Spring 2014 Writing, Reporting and Ethics I

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Class meets Mondays from 12:30 to 3:15 p.m. in MZ 360 beginning Jan. 27, 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisite: Grade of “C” or better in English 115 or its equivalent; typing proficiency. Basic news gathering and writing. Includes interviewing, speech/meeting coverage, preparing news copy, and traditional- and electronic-information gathering as applied to news decision making. Introduces ethics as part of developing news judgment and learning the values practiced by professional journalists. 6 hours of classroom and lab activity.

REQUIRED MATERIALS/TEXTS:

- iPad 32 GB with the following applications: Pages, Nearpod, Pocket WavePad, AudioNote, Adobe Reader and Box. Your device may be an iPad Mini, iPad 2 (though not recommended) or iPad with Retina Display, or any subsequent iPad model. Please bring your iPad on the first day of class.
 - Required app to be purchased: AudioNote (\$4.99); Required free apps are listed in weekly schedule. Additional apps (free and paid) may be required during the semester, per your professor.
 - ✓ Optional app to be purchased: Explain Everything (\$2.99)
 - *Associated Press Stylebook (2011, 2012 or 2013 version) or the AP Stylebook app*
- Because this is an iPad class, we won't be using a traditional textbook (either printed or digital)

RECOMMENDED READING, LISTENING AND VIEWING:

1. Los Angeles Times (Limited free online access without a subscription; individual articles available for free through the Oviatt Library database)
2. New York Times (Limited free online access without a subscription; individual articles available for free through the Oviatt Library database)
3. KPCC-FM, 89.3 (<http://www.scpr.org/>)
4. “On The Media,” 4 to 5 p.m. Sundays, KPCC-FM 89.3, and www.onthemedial.org
5. ProPublica—View daily at <http://www.propublica.org>

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This is a dynamic, hands-on course in which you will learn the principles of news writing and reporting using mobile technology. Personal ownership of an 32GB iPad (running iOS 6) is mandatory and it must be brought to every class session, fully charged and ready to go beginning on our Jan. 27 class session. Students are not allowed to share iPads during class or for class work. You may choose to have a 16GB iPad but it will likely require you to transfer data more frequently

from your iPad because you will have less storage space. No other type of tablet is acceptable due to the fact that we need to be using the same apps as a class. The CSUN Bookstore has iPads available for purchase with a two-payment or three-payment plan. The iPad will be fully integrated into our coursework. Certain apps will be used for learning and some for news gathering and editing. In this course, you will complete writing/news gathering assignments during class, reporting and writing original stories and completing other assignments that are due each week or by a particular deadline. There will be discussions each week on various topics related to journalism. Students will quickly learn that procrastinating will make this course more difficult. Students who come to class prepared, listen and take notes during the discussions should do well in this course. Students will find that their newsgathering and writing skills will quickly improve.

News and feature story assignments:

You will write four full-length stories out of class: a one-source profile, coverage of a campus speech, an Associated Students meeting or its equivalent and an issues-based interview story in addition to producing a podcast. A grading rubric will be provided for each of the full-length stories. Stories containing a GFE (gross factual error) will automatically be marked down to a “C,” and then additional errors will be deducted. Double-check the spelling of all names, facts and figures to avoid a GFE.

You will tweet about your original stories so if you don’t already have a “news only” Twitter account, go to Twitter.com to create an account that you will use exclusively for reporting purposes.

It is a conflict of interest to write about your friends, current and/or future professors, family members, neighbors or co-workers, so you will need to do some research in order to generate story ideas. Depending on the content and the quality, you are encouraged to submit your stories for possible publication in the print and/or online version of the Daily Sundial campus newspaper. The decision to print, or not print, your story is made by the student editors of the newspaper, not by your professor.

In-class writing assignments and homework:

Each week, you will do in-class writing, so attendance is critical. In-class writing/mobile journalism assignments cannot be made up. Assignments are due at the end of the class session. A limited amount of traditional homework will be given so that you can focus on reporting and writing your four original news/feature stories, in addition to completing the weekly quizzes.

In-class mobile journalism/iPad assignments:

Each week, you will use your iPad in class for mobile journalism assignments on campus and other assignments in the classroom. Students who forget their iPad or run out of battery will miss out on completing in-class assignment(s) for that class session.

“News Notes”:

It is vital for everyone who lives in a democratic society—whether a journalist or not—to be aware of current events and the major players involved. Each week, a designated pair of students will make a Storify presentation of the top news stories that appeared in the media during the previous week, including photographs and a broadcast segment. The two students will then oversee a mock “budget meeting” in which classmates will brainstorm ideas for follow-up stories related to the major current events. You will be graded on your choice of stories and your ability to engage your classmates in discussion.

Podcast:

You will produce a news podcast using a short audio interview that you will conduct individually. More details will be given in class.

Moodle student discussions on media ethics:

Four times during the semester, your professor will post discussion questions on Moodle pertaining to media ethics. Each student will post his/her response and will comment on at least two classmates' responses.

Quizzes:

AP Style quizzes: Five AP Style quizzes will be given in class during the semester. There are no quiz make-ups, but the lowest score of the five scores will be dropped.

Interview a Professional Journalist:

One of the best ways to learn about a profession is to talk to someone who's currently working in it. For this assignment, you'll conduct a minimum 15-minute interview a professional journalist or public relations practitioner, preferably at their workplace. A list of required questions will be provided. On May 5, students will present a brief summary of their interview.

GRADING

Course grades will be assigned according to college structure, using the A-F scale. Assignments are graded according to a rubric, which will be given for the particular assignment. Late papers will be accepted for up to one week but will lose a full letter grade. All work for this course must have been written/produced during the Spring 2014 semester. No credit will be given for work produced before Jan. 21, 2014. The course grading structure is as follows, but may vary slightly during the course of the semester:

Original news/feature stories	(30%)
In-class writing/mobile journalism	(20%)
News Notes	(5%)
Podcast	(5%)
Ethics discussions	(10%)
Ladd book project	(10%)
Journalist Interview	(5%)
AP Style quizzes	(5%)
Final exam	(10%)

The University uses a combination of the following grading options: A-F Letter-grading: 100-94%=A, 93-90%=A-, 89-87%=B+, 86-83%=B, 82-80%=B-, 79-77%=C+, 76-74%=C, 73-70%=C-, 69-67%=D+, 66-64%=D, 63-60%=D-, 59% and below=F. Grades A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- indicate passing grades; F indicates failure.

Please note that in order to be eligible to enroll in other CSUN journalism courses, you must pass Jour 110 with a C or better. A grade of C- is insufficient to enroll in Jour 210.

PLAGIARISM

The Journalism Department is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught cheating will receive a failing grade in the class and will be reported to the University for possible further disciplinary action. For a further explanation of the behavior defined as cheating, and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, consult pages 647-648 of the 2012-2014 CSUN catalog.

Please also remember that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by

U.S. copyright laws. Passing this information off as your own is a violation of CSUN's plagiarism policy, and carries the penalties outlined above.

From the CSUN Catalog: “Disciplinary records of any action of academic dishonesty are retained in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. These records may be available to prospective employers and other educational institutions, in accordance with federal and state regulations. In short, a student committing any act of academic dishonesty will run a serious risk of harming his or her future educational or employment opportunities.”

Plagiarism is not tolerated in professional journalism and it won't be tolerated in this class. Any amount of content that is plagiarized or fabricated will result in referral to the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. All students will receive information on how to avoid plagiarism and how to properly rewrite a passage, and will be required to sign an anti-plagiarism pledge.

CLASS POLICIES

Assignments/Quizzes: Assignments and quizzes cannot be made up. Please give yourself enough time to allow for computer malfunctions or other unforeseen technical problems. Start contacting your sources ASAP. It will probably take longer to reach them than you expect. Out-of-class assignment due dates/times will be provided by your professor. In-class assignments are due by the end of the class session.

Attendance: Being here, on time, is vital to your success in this class.

From the CSUN Catalog: “Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who are absent from the first two meetings of a class that meets more than once a week, or from the first meeting of a class that meets once a week, lose the right to remain on the class roll and must formally withdraw from the class, following University procedures and deadlines. Failure to formally withdraw from a class will result in the instructor assigning to the student a grade of “WU” (Unauthorized Withdrawl) which, in computing a student’s grade point average, counts as a grade of “F.”

Class etiquette: Please turn off your phone upon entering the classroom and refrain from checking your email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, etc. accounts during class. It is disruptive, annoying and disrespectful to your classmates and professor. We have an appointment every Monday afternoon and ringing phones, texting and using social media detracts from our valuable time together. Anyone doing any of these behaviors during class will receive a warning. On second offense, the student will be excused from class for the day and will not be allowed to make up any quizzes or assignments that day.

Diversity: Students in this course are strongly encouraged to broaden their journalistic experiences, with the professor's help, by including in their work people and subjects such as ethnic, racial and religious minorities; the elderly, disabled and poor; gay men and lesbians; and other similar groups. The intent is to ensure that student work reflects the diversity of the community.

E-mail: This will be our primary means of communication therefore, each student is required to check his/her CSUN e-mail on a daily basis.

Respecting your classmates: You are expected to treat your classmates with respect, both in class and in our online forums. Opposing viewpoints are welcomed during class discussions but snide comments and inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

Students with disabilities: Students who may need accommodations in this class are highly encouraged to register with Disability Resources and Educational Services, which is located in Bayramian Hall, Room 110. Contact: (818) 677-2684

Withdrawing from class: It is *your* decision and responsibility to withdraw (drop) from class. If you are falling behind, please contact your professor so that we can discuss your progress.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Department of Journalism strives to prepare its students to become well-educated, principled citizens who are capable of initiating careers as skilled journalists, public relations practitioners and other related communication professionals.

- 1) Students will be able to report and write for diverse publics, using proper grammar and punctuation, word usage and spelling, sentence and storytelling structures across multiple journalistic formats.
- 2) Students will be able to gather and analyze information, including basic numerical concepts, using reporting techniques, such as interviewing, observation, and researching primary and secondary sources.
- 3) Students will be able to think critically, creatively and independently.
- 4) Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- 5) Students will apply tools and technologies appropriate for the news media professions in which they work to communicate for and with diverse publics.
- 6) Students will be able to understand and apply the historical, theoretical, legal and societal contexts for producing and consuming news media for consumers, ranging from local to global publics.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES for Jour 110

To ensure that our majors can perform in J210, the J110 students should complete at least four out-of-class reporting and writing assignments, including a one-source profile, coverage of a speech, a public meeting and an issues-based interview, c

To successfully complete this course, students will be able to:

- begin to master the skills of good journalists: Be smart, quick, courteous, curious, pleasant, honest and courageous;
- start to foster curiosity and observation skills;
- develop deadline writing and information-gathering techniques;
- master the concept of writing leads;
- explore how to organize information in a reader-friendly format and to write stories for a mass audience;
- learn the essential elements of how to cover a speech, conduct a news interview and cover a public agency meeting;
- begin to develop discipline in writing/reporting with accuracy, clarity, style, objectivity and sensitivity;
- be introduced to critical thinking skills with an emphasis on reading and understanding the news;
- explore the importance of a free press as well as the various ethics codes and canons that guide the profession;
- pay attention to current events.

Weekly Timeline: Writing, Reporting and Ethics I (Jour 110)

Week 1—1/20 No class—Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Week 2—1/27 No class—Labor Day

Apps needed: Nearpod, Socrative

Discussion about news values, plagiarism, profiles, introduction to AP Style

Review of course requirements/syllabus/iPad

Profile story pitch due 10 p.m. Thursday, 1/30

Week 3—2/3

Apps needed: Brainscape, AudioNote and Storify

iPad assignment: AP Style flashcards

Discussion on leads and nut graphs, active and passive voice

AP Style Quiz #1, to be given in class

AP Style flashcards using Brainscape app due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 2/6

Ethics Discussion #1 due 8 p.m. Friday, 2/7

Week 4—2/10

App needed: Flipboard

iPad assignment: creating RSS feed

Discussion on delayed i.d. leads, story forms, story organization, sources and online research, media ethics and law

“News Notes” presentations start

Profile story (lead to nut graph only) due 10 p.m. Thursday, 2/13

Week 5—2/17

App needed: Twitter

iPad assignment: tweeting speeches

Discussion on accuracy, speeches

AP Style Quiz #2, to be given in class

Speech story pitch due 10 p.m. Thursday, 2/20 (Lead to nut graph due 3/6)

Meeting story choice due 10 p.m. Thursday, 2/20 (Lead to nut graph due 3/13)

Week 6—2/24

Apps needed: Snapseed and Instagram

iPad assignment: street photography; posting/tagging online photos

Discussion on covering public meetings, getting to know the agenda, writing an “advance” story

Profile story (full story) due 10 p.m. Thursday, 2/27

Ethics Discussion #2 due 8 p.m. Friday, 2/28

Week 7—3/3

App needed: Police Scanner+

iPad assignment: monitoring police/fire scanners

Discussion on covering cops and courts

In-class writing: police leads

AP Style Quiz #3, to be given in class

Speech story (lead to nut graph only) due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/6

Issues-based interview story pitch due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/6

Week 8—3/10

(No News Notes this week)

Field Trip to LAFD Station 70 at Reseda and Lassen at 1:30 p.m.

iPad assignment: Taking notes and photos of field trip

Meeting story (lead to nut graph only) due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/13

2nd write thru of full profile story due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/13

Week 9—3/17

Apps needed: Pocket WavePad

iPad assignment: audio capture and editing

Discussion on story organization, story forms and storytelling and feature techniques, podcasting

AP Style Quiz #4, to be given in class

1st draft of full speech story due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/20

Issues-based interview story (lead to nut graph) due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/20

Ethics Discussion #3 due 8 p.m. Friday, 3/21

Week 10—3/24

App needed: Twitter

iPad assignment: Twitter scavenger hunt

Discussion on verification, covering a news conference, writing obituaries

1st draft of meeting story (full story) due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 3/27

Week 11—3/31 no class—Cesar Chavez Day

Field trip story due by 10 p.m. Tuesday, April 1

2nd draft of full speech story due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 4/3

1st draft of issues-based interview story (full story) due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 4/3

Week 12—4/7 no class—Spring Break

Week 13—4/14

App needed: Twitter

iPad assignment: Twitter scavenger hunt

Discussion about online journalism, social media, covering mental illness

AP Style Quiz #5, to be given in class

Podcast script due by 10 p.m. Wednesday, 4/16

2nd draft of meeting story due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 4/17

2nd draft of full issues-based interview story due by 10 p.m. Thursday, 4/17

Week 14—4/21

Presentation of RSS feeds

Discussion about syndicating data, search engine optimization

Distribute “Inventing L.A.” quiz (due 4/28)

Podcast due by 10 p.m. Tuesday, April 22

Week 15—4/28

Last News Notes presentation

Screening of “Inventing L.A.” documentary

“Inventing L.A.” take-home quiz due at beginning of class

Interview/photo with a journalist/PR practitioner due by 10 p.m. Wednesday, 4/30

Ethics Discussion #4 due 8 p.m. Friday, 5/1

Week 16—5/5 (Last regular class session)

Presentation of Journalist Interviews

Review of class material, prep for final exam

Final Exam: 12:45 to 2:45 p.m. Monday, May 12 (in-class writing assignment)

For withdrawal deadlines, go to <http://www.csun.edu/anr/bulletin/springsemester.html>

Note: This syllabus is subject to updates and changes at the professor’s discretion.